

COM 205 Communication in a Global Age

Instructor: Dr. Greg Pitts

Office: 105 Communications Building

Office Hours: M.W.F, 8:40 10:30 AM, T.R, 2:30 – 3:30 PM, and by appointment

Telephone: 256-765-4260 Email: gpitts@una.edu

Final Exam: Friday, May 6, 10:15 a.m. – 12 noon

I. Course Description: Foundation course in communication, placing U.S. media in a global perspective and examining both human and technological impact on communication. Students study the importance of human communication and mass communication message distribution through books, newspapers, magazines, recordings, movies, radio, television and the Internet, and the messages carried through news, public relations and advertising. The course emphasizes the relationship of media and democracy, ethical decision-making, the diversity of audiences, and the global impact of communications.

II. Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

- 1) identify appropriate forms of mass communication including books and magazines; newspapers; recorded music; radio; film and home video; television and the Internet;
- 2) discuss the relationship between communicators and society, and understand the consequences of using mass media versus interpersonal communication;
- 3) discuss and demonstrate attributes of communications literacy and media literacy;
- 4) identify key periods in the development of mass media;
- 5) identify key forms of media technology—including social media;
- 6) understand the role of the First Amendment in a democratic society and the role of the mass media as a contributor to democratic governance;
- 7) identify the role of the mass media in serving diverse groups and contributing to the global flow of communication;
- 8) analyze legal, ethical and social issues pertaining to freedom of speech and press, media use and media availability;
- 9) strengthen communication and media literacy skills;
- 10) demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- 11) think critically, creatively and independently.

To meet these objectives, we will employ lectures and demonstrations and textbook readings.

TEXT: *Converging Media: A New Introduction to Mass Communication*, 2nd Edition, by John Pavlik and Shawn McIntosh. ISBN: 978-0-19-537910-5. Additional materials will be posted on Angel for student access.

III. *Academic Honesty and Student Conduct*: Students in attendance at the University of North Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum to avoid discipline.

All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. That includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following: (1) Cheating—using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; (2) Plagiarism—representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise; (3) Fabrication—unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise; (4) Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty—intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Please review, sign and submit the Academic Honesty Policy.

Audio or video recording of class sessions is prohibited unless the instructor grants permission in advance. Course content is either copyrighted by the authors of the course books and materials (and used under educational fair use) or the copyright is held by the course lecturers. You may not use the materials or likeness of the instructor without written permission.

If you plan to use your computer to take notes during class, you should plan to sit on the front row. If you plan to use your computer to take notes but believe there is a chance you will be distracted by other online activities, **please sit on the back row**. *Front row computer activities—beyond note taking—that prove distracting to the instructor or other students will result in a loss of 20 points from the student's subtotal of earned points from the course maximum available points.*

Cell phones should be turned to vibrate during class or turned off. I don't stop my class to answer my phone or send a text. You shouldn't either. You will disrupt class and interfere with other students' learning. During exams, cell phones should be put away; answering a cell phone during an exam or quiz will result in zero scores for the assignments. Do not engage in text messaging or surfing the Internet during this class. If you are bored, please leave the room.

IV. *Absenteeism:* When you are hired for your first fulltime job after graduation, you will be expected to report to work each and every day. Similarly, I expect you to attend class regularly. In my mind, I award everyone an "A" for attendance and participation. There are class days when I may choose to record an activity participation score to those students who are present when I take the roll. Quizzes, class activities, or graded work missed due to absence from class or because you are tardy in arriving for class will have zero scores recorded for those assignments. Should you have problems attending class please contact me.

In many cases, even if you are missing class due to a university event, it may not be possible to make up missed class work. Students who plan involvement in an activity, which will prevent regular class attendance, should take this course at a time when attendance can be assured. If you miss one of the three major semester exams, I would suggest that you consider using one of your exam "drops" in place of the missed exam. I will deal with missed exams on a case-by-case basis and students should understand that they are not guaranteed "the right" to make up a missed assignment no matter the cause of the absence.

When missing class and related assignments due to an illness, it is the student's responsibility to provide a document issued by a medical authority to verify the student's absence due to illness. The instructor will not call the Health Center or any other source to verify a student's reason for absence.

All written assignments unless otherwise indicated, should be typed or keyboarded, double-spaced, with no grammatical errors. All students have access to personal computer and word processing software. Assignments not typed or word-processed will be returned ungraded.

Late Assignments: All projects and written work will be due on the assigned date and at the beginning of the class hour. Should a project be due at a time other than our regular meeting, it will be due by 2:00 p.m. in my office. If I am not in, you may give the assignment to the departmental secretary in room 105. Do not ask for extra time because you failed to anticipate the difficulty of an assignment.

Cell phones should be turned to vibrate during class or turned off. I don't stop my class to answer my phone or send a text. You shouldn't either. You will disrupt class and interfere with other students' learning. During exams or class sessions, cell phones should be put away; answering a cell phone during an exam or quiz will result in zero scores for the assignments. Texting or Internet surfing during class will result in zero scores for daily assignments. Repeated instances of texting or Internet surfing during class will result in your being asked to leave the classroom.

University policies regarding withdrawal from this course will be strictly adhered to. An "I" will be assigned only if the student and I agree there is a reasonable prospect that the work can be made up and I agree to allow the student to make the work up.

The final exam is scheduled for Friday, May 6, 10:15 a.m. - noon. This is the officially scheduled time for the exam. The Provost's Office will NOT allow me to give the exam at any other time. Please do not ask for a time or day change.

Students with documented learning disabilities should notify the instructor on or before the completion of the second week of class if special provisions are requested to accommodate the disability.

V. *Important Dates:*

January 17: Martin Luther King Holiday
January 19: Last day for 100% tuition and fee refund
February 8,9, 10: CAAP Exam
February 2: Student schedule subject to cancellation for unpaid balances. There is a \$75 reinstatement fee.

February 18: Winter Break
March 11: Last date to drop with a W
March 14: Beginning of WP/WF drop period
May 3: Last meeting day for this course
May 5: Study Day
May 6, Friday: Final Exam, 10:15 a.m. – 12 noon

VI. *Class Preparation:* I promise to come to every class period prepared to teach. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared to learn. Read your textbook chapters; you will be given a series of quizzes from the chapters.

If you have difficulty with your work in the course, please come see me. University rules prevent me from sending specific student grades or assignment scores through email but I will gladly talk with you about your course progress.

VII. *Angel Learning Community support system:* You may access Angel by going to <https://una.angellearning.com/>. This is a direct route to the Angel Learning Community page. Angel will help you access class handouts and other information that will help you throughout the semester.

Please check this site regularly. You are responsible for all information posted and all messages sent to you by e-mail from the Angel course site. Forgetting to monitor this address, will not excuse you from the responsibilities listed there.

Electronic mail: Students enrolled in this class must have an electronic mail account and Internet access. I will regularly send announcements via Angel. It is your responsibility to either check your UNA email account or to change the default email address listed on Angel to the address of your choosing. If you are having trouble logging on to the system, call 256-765-7272 (x7272 from a campus phone) and they will walk you through the process

VIII. *Inclement Weather:* Unless extreme weather conditions occur, the university will remain open during inclement weather and I will meet with my classes. Should the university close, any assignments for that day will be due at the next regular class meeting.

IX. *Office Hours:* My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. Please DO NOT HESITATE to e-mail, call me at the office or stop by my office during office hours. It's also perfectly fine to contact me or stop by at other times or on other days but just like you, I have assignments for my classes plus other work I have to do. For that reason, I may not always be able to stop what I am doing when you stop by during other times but I will arrange another time to meet with you if my office hours are not convenient. It is NOT a good idea to stop by my office just before class starts. Even one simple question could delay the start of class.

X. *Class Assignments:*

Test Format: Tests will primarily include multiple choice and short answer questions. Although some of the multiple choice questions will focus on evaluating foundation knowledge of material, the instructor will attempt to ask application questions that require the student to utilize concepts presented in the course. Exams are not scaled nor are extra point assignments available. Three major exams and a final exam will be given. The final exam is comprehensive, covering chapters 1-15. You may drop the lowest 100 point exam score. *The instructor reserves the right to change scheduled exam dates if necessary.* Exams stay on file in my office. If you desire additional review of your exam performance, I would be happy to schedule a review time.

As a quiz assignment, you will be tested on your ability to memorize and be able to recite or write on paper, with correct spelling and punctuation, the 45 words that guarantee five important freedoms in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. No credit will be awarded if there are deviances in your presentation. You will earn either 10 points on the assignment or a zero. I will provide at least two opportunities for you to earn credit, though you will be awarded only ten total points.

Final Course Grade: Determined by your performance on the following activities:

Exam One: February 10 or 15	100 points
Exam Two: March 15 or 17	100 points
Exam Three: April 26 or 28	100 points
Brief Paper: Media reflection, due Feb 22	25 points
Brief Paper: News coverage, due March 24	25 points
Quiz and Class Scores: From lectures and assigned readings	100 points
Comprehensive Final Exam: Friday, May 6, 10:15 a.m. – 12 noon	150 points
TOTAL	500 points---The lowest score of the three 100 point exams will be dropped from the final grade calculation.

A = 90-100%	Excellent scholarship
B = 80-89.99%	Good scholarship
C = 70-79.99%	Fair scholarship
D = 62-69.99%	Poor scholarship
F = Below 62%	Failure

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE: Jan 13

First Session, Thursday, Jan 13: Introduction to course. Review syllabus, discuss expectations

Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 1: Mass Communication and Its Digital Transformation; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 2 for next class.

WEEK TWO: Jan 18, 20

Media Literacy and Ethics; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 3 for next class.

WEEK THREE: Jan 25, 27

Digital Media: Online and Ubiquitous: These lectures will be posted online on Angel; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 4 Books, Newspaper, and Magazines for next class.

WEEK FOUR: Feb 1, 3

Books, Newspaper, and Magazines; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 5; Audio Media: Music, Recordings, Radio for next class.

WEEK FIVE: Feb 8, 10

Audio Media: Music, Recordings, Radio; **Test One: 100 points, Chapters 1 – 5;** Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 6 for next class.

WEEK SIX: Feb 15, 17

Visual Media: Movies and Television; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 7 for next class.

WEEK SEVEN Feb 22, 24

Information Overload, Usability, and Interactive Media; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 8 for next class.

WEEK EIGHT March 1, 3

Networks and Distributing Digital Content; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 9; Social Media and Web 2.0 for next class.

WEEK NINE March 8, 10

Social Media and Web 2.0; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 10; Journalism for next class.

WEEK TEN March 15, 17

Test Two: 100 points, Chapters 6 – 10; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 11; Entertainment for next class.

WEEK ELEVEN March 22, 24

Entertainment ; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 12 for next class.

WEEK TWELVE April 5, 7

Advertising and Public Relations; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapter 13; Media Theory and Research: From Writing to Text Messaging for next class.

WEEK THIRTEEN April 12, 14

Media Theory and Research: From Writing to Text Messaging; Read: *Converging Media*, Chapters 14 and 15; Communication Law and Regulation in the Digital Age/Mass Communication and Politics in the Digital Age for next class.

WEEK FOURTEEN April 19, 21

Communication Law and Regulation in the Digital Age/Mass Communication and Politics in the Digital Age

WEEK FIFTEEN April 26, 28

Communication Law--continued; **Test Three: 100 points, Chapters 11 – 15**

WEEK SIXTEEN May 3

Review and prepare for the comprehensive final exam.

X. Statement Regarding Student Disabilities

"In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Developmental Services prior to the beginning of the semester to initiate the accommodation process and to notify instructors within the first three class meetings to develop an accommodation plan. Appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements, but no fundamental or substantial alteration of academic standards will be made. Students needing assistance should contact Developmental Services."

Information Sheet: GLOBAL MEDIA. Spring 2011.

To assist me in getting to know you and in learning your particular interests and needs, please complete the following information sheet. Pay particular attention to the signature statement at the bottom of the page. Please turn this sheet in by your class session on Tuesday, February 1. This is a graded assignment.

Name _____ Expected graduation _____

Hometown _____ Local Telephone number _____

Adviser _____ Emphasis area _____

Local Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Media Consumption: Tell me what content from your field you regularly—daily or weekly—consume.

Previous media or theatre experience: _____

Why are you in this class? _____

Career Plans: _____

I have reviewed the syllabus and I am aware of the course objectives and proposed assignments. I have read the attendance policy and I am aware of the penalties. I understand the syllabus represents a contract between the course instructor and me. It is both the instructor's responsibility and my responsibility to meet the requirements of the syllabus.

Signed: _____

Academic Honesty Policy

Department of Communications

Academic Honesty. All members of the university community are expected to be honorable and observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. Students are expected to behave in an ethical manner. Individuals who disregard the core values of truth and honesty bring disrespect to themselves and the University. A university community that allows academic dishonesty will suffer harm to the reputation of students, faculty and graduates.

It is in the best interest of the entire university community to sanction any individual who chooses not to accept the principles of academic honesty by committing acts such as cheating, plagiarism or misrepresentation. Offenses are reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for referral to the University Student Discipline System for disposition. (*University of North Alabama Catalog.*)

Any act of dishonesty in academic work constitutes academic misconduct. That includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following: (1) Cheating—using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; (2) Plagiarism—representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise; (3) Fabrication—unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise; (4) Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty—intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism is the representation of the work of another person as one's own. In a digital world, the copying of text, graphics, audio and video, can be easily accomplished; the sharing or borrowing of ideas and information may seem perfectly legitimate but taking or borrowing those ideas and failing to provide reference information about the original source for the idea or information, is plagiarism.

Material used in student papers, speeches, electronic media productions or other assignments is expected to be the student's own work unless properly identified as the work of others. In written work, identification consists of quotation marks, footnotes or endnotes, indentation or spacing change, usually in combination. A speaker may indicate "according to ..." or other words to attribute quoted material. Electronic productions such as films, videos, etc., should use a means of citation appropriate to the work. Electronic productions are never exempt from the responsibility of identifying and citing appropriate sources.

In some cases attribution may not be necessary, for example, if a phrase or section is so commonly known that there could be no possibility of believing the student was claiming the work to be his/her own.

When a student attempts to present a speech or other assignment prepared by someone else as her/his own work, this could be plagiarism but it is more likely cheating. The instructors in the Department of Communications will never approve of the use of materials previously submitted by another student. If you attempt to reuse or recycle a speech or paper (and any accompanying materials such as PowerPoint presentations, handouts, etc.) written by someone else, this is cheating. If you give a paper or electronic document to another student, and that student uses or attempts to reuse that work in another course, you are guilty of aiding and abetting academic dishonesty.

If an instructor believes a student has committed cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or aiding and abetting academic dishonesty, he/she will refer the offender to the department head for investigation. The department head and instructor will meet to discuss the matter. If they concur that cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or aiding and abetting academic dishonesty has occurred, the student will receive a grade of F or WF in the course in which the offense occurred. During this process the student will be permitted to bring evidence that the plagiarism has not occurred. The Department of Communications will pursue issues of academic honesty for currently enrolled and former students.

Additional sanctions by the University are possible, including expulsion from the university.

My signature indicates that I have read and understand the Academic Honesty Policy from the Department of Communications. I agree to adhere to these guidelines, to the best of my ability, and I am aware of the consequences of policy violations.

Name (PRINT): _____ Class: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this policy is provided with your syllabus for your records.